

What is claimed is:

1. A method for detecting the presence of CD163 in a biological sample comprising:

- a) contacting the sample with a CD163 capture  
5 antibody to form a CD163-antibody complex; and  
b) contacting the CD163-antibody complex with a CD163 detection antibody so that levels of CD163 in the sample are detected.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the CD163 capture  
10 antibody is MAC2-158 or MAC2-48 and the CD163 detection antibody is RM3/1.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the biological sample is human plasma.

4. A method for monitoring the course of an  
15 inflammatory condition or inflammatory process comprising detecting the presence of CD163 in biological samples via the method of claim 1.

5. A composition for prevention or treatment of inflammation comprising CD163.

20 6. The composition of claim 5 further comprising a glucocorticoid.

7. A method for reducing the signs and symptoms of inflammation comprising contacting cells or tissues with the composition of claim 5.

25 8. A method for reducing the signs and symptoms of inflammation comprising contacting cells or tissues with the composition of claim 6.

9. A method for preventing or treating inflammation in an animal comprising administering to the animal an effective amount of the composition of claim 5.

10. A method for preventing or treating inflammation  
5 in an animal comprising administering to the animal an effective amount of the composition of claim 6.

11. A method for preventing or treating inflammation in an animal comprising administering to the animal an effective amount of the composition of claim 7.